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ABSTRACT

This monograph outlines important issues that surround the topic of children's science books. In the introduction, the role of books in hands-on science curricula is discussed. In the title essay of the collection, F. J. Rutherford argues against the reliance on textbooks in elementary school science, but yet feels that books are an essential part of science learning. In "Gaps and Emphases," L. Goldberg reviews trends in science book publishing. In the next section, six authors talk about their work with science books. The next section focuses on critical responses to the books authors produce. Details on selecting, editing, and evaluating science books are presented. The final section, "In the Library and Classroom," contains essays that present practitioner's reflections on the use of juvenile trade materials. The final section also contains two essays by educational researchers who have studied science books in the context of classroom and library. In "The Role of Science Books in the Primary Classroom," E. Chittenden presents the results of interviews with 46 kindergarten and primary teachers concerning the evaluation and role of science books in their classrooms. Also presented are the results of a children's science book inventory of public and school libraries. In the final essay, K. Ross presents student outcomes from three approaches to teaching: the traditional textbook-based, didactic science teaching; activity-based, discovery-oriented science teaching; and a conceptual change approach to science teaching. She concludes that both a textbook approach and an activity-based approach are problematic in giving students an understanding of science. She therefore advocates conceptual change teaching where science is related to experience so children can find their way around the neighborhood of science. (PR)

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